

Quid Novi

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A Summer of well... lots

By Brian Fell, LLB III

I'm expecting some questions like «How was your trip?» or «What's South America like?». After 4 months, 9 countries, and thousands upon thousands of kilometres (and dollars) it would be hard to answer questions like that without writing a very long paper which I don't expect to find time to do (unless I can talk the faculty into accepting it as fulfilling my writing requirement). So, to help narrow the field of enquiry (or avoid it completely) I've sketched what would be a table of contents to a summary of my summer. Please quote paragraph number in any communications. Further precision may be obtained by breaking down the

subject of a paragraph even further say, regarding the people in that area, the price of gasoline, or the average daily temperature.

1. Bussed from Montreal to New York where I called J.B. who was too busy to see me. My, how the big city can change people. Flew off to Caracas and spent two days (record-breaking time by South American standards) clearing my motorbike (arrived by ship) through Venezuelan customs.

2. Spent a week on a Caribbean beach snorkelling and laying in my hammock reading «South America on a Shoe-string» to plan my trip. This original plan

was to be revised almost weekly from then on.

3. The beginning of the Andes. Covered with dense jungle. Narrow windy roads with sheer drops (great views).

4. More beach. Beaches are probably the geographical feature that changes least from one place to another in the world. Can bore.

5. The Gran Sabana and Guyana Highlands. No big deal except for the astounding and unique Tepuies, columns of rock rising like giant chimneys out of the gentle, rolling surroundings. Unfortu-

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Le traité imaginaire

par Francis Harvey, BCL II

Quelle importance a la réalité? La réalité est associée aux faits, aux événements nécessairement vécus par un petit nombre de personnes, tandis que l'imaginaire, c'est l'impression laissée par ce même événement dans l'esprit des absents et de ceux qui le suivaient à distance. En effet, chacun de nous a une opinion bien arrêtée sur les problèmes israélo-arabes, sur la faim dans le monde

et sur les bleuets du Lac St-Jean. Mais, combien d'entre nous ont déjà mis les pieds au Moyen-Orient? Combien d'entre nous ont déjà eu faim et combien d'entre vous avez déjà mangé des bleuets du Lac St-Jean fraîchement cueillis? L'imaginaire occupe une très grande partie de notre esprit et se substitue fréquemment à la réalité. Il est vrai que nous n'avons bien souvent rien d'autre à quoi nous raccrocher, mais on doit être

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ANNOUNCEMENTS ANNONCES

STUDENT LOUNGE - The LSA is proud to announce that a pin-ball machine, bubble-hockey and a pool table are on their way to the student lounge! Let the fun continue!

LAW JOURNAL - Notice to all second, third and fourth year students: your copy of issue 36(2) of the McGill Law Journal is now available at Sadies' free of charge (you paid for it in your fees). This issue is the largest in Journal history, and filled with all sorts of interesting stuff. Pour ceux en première année, malheureusement vous ne serez éligible à votre propre copie de la Revue qu'à partir du numéro 37(1), dont la parution est prévue pour les mois de décembre ou janvier.

LEGAL THEORY WORKSHOP - Monday, Sept. 30 at 12:00 noon (room 202), Professor Cohen will present «The Future of a Disillusion», which deals in an informal and intuitive way with the significance of the dissolution of the Soviet Union for Marxist claims and allegiances. Professor Cohen is an extremely prolific and respected writer in political philosophy. He is especially regarded for his work in Marxist theory. For students interested in reading Professor Cohen's paper, a copy of the paper is placed in the Library reserve.

THE INSTITUTE OF COMPARATIVE LAW & FORUM NATIONAL - Present Professor Bereket Habte Selassie, professor of Law and Politics at Howard University and Georgetown University, and formerly Attorney-General of Ethiopia. The topic is «Law in a Changing Environment, Reflections on an African Experience» and will be held on Friday, October 4th 1991 at noon in room 202.

SECOND-YEAR TUTORIAL - Attention: all students enrolled in the second-year tutorial programme (legal research, writing and mooting), have you signed up for a legal memorandum assignment? The sign-up sheet is posted on the notice board in the Pit. If your name is not on a list as of Friday, October 4th you will be assigned to a group.

MOOT - Would you like to judge a second-year moot? The tutorial programme (legal research, writing and mooting) requires thirty-three (33) 3rd or 4th year students to judge the second-year moots (pleading only). The pleadings will take place October 21-24 and 28-31. The sign-up sheet is posted outside the LSA.

NOTICE - Environmentally-conscious student-lecturer driving to Ottawa every Thursday is willing to offer free ride or act as your courier (all my expenses have been paid for); return same day or next day. For detail, please call Nan at 522-3069.

Coin des SPORTS Corner

By your friendly sportspeople

Intramural sports are off to a roaring start, with promising results from all faculty teams.

Soccer

The women's team, the Brewers, defeated Marketing on Wed. Sept. 18 by a score of 3-0 with goals by Corina S. and Allison W. (Toby approved). On Sunday Sept. 22 the Brewers were able to hold Chix Wid Kix to a 0-0 tie despite injuries and missing players, to remain undefeated. Mitch D. came closest to scoring with a long loft that hit the cross bar. The women's team is still looking for enthusiasts to come out and play soccer and drink beer. Contact Jennifer Griffith or Mitch Dufresne if interested.

The men's team, the Kickbacks, won their season opener on Thurs. Sept. 19 against the Dragons 2-0. The goals were scored by Alain S. and Mahmud J. Captain J.B. feels the team has fine skill and great depth. Perhaps if they had watched the women's team they would also have been able to score 3 goals in their season opener...

Co-Rec Softball

This year's version of the Law-Wrecks finds itself in the thick of the quest for its first grail. Led by the versatile «sweet luv» Malka and the tape measure blast of rookie R.C. Jones, the Wreck surged to a 3-0 record last week. Other contribution of note came from B. Morel, who left a good deal of skin from each leg in the dirt around third, and J. Neatby whose 4 H.R.'s start has made believers out of his fans after last season's .067 average.

Men's Softball

After an off-season spent reflecting over last year's bitter playoff defeat, the Regal Legals are preparing to begin their 1991 campaign. A revamped infield and a more emotionally secure outfield (led by Jeff N., whose winter sessions with a noted sports psychologist should help his concentration level) are expected to help the «Gals» overcome their past underachieving. Contributions from Edsel «I'd steal first if it was allowed» M. and Kirby Puckett look-alike Rob «happenin' times» M. are necessary for the season to begin on the right note.

Ultimate

Semi-finalists last year, the California Raisins began their 1991 campaign with 2 weekend wins. Powered by 1990 M.V.P. Toby and returning deep threats Allison W. and Stacy Z., who rose from her sickbed to smite the enemy, the Raisins jumped to early leads which they were able to protect. Prospects for the remainder of the season are high so long as André B. drains the cement from his hands and Roger invites everyone to his next party.

Flag Football

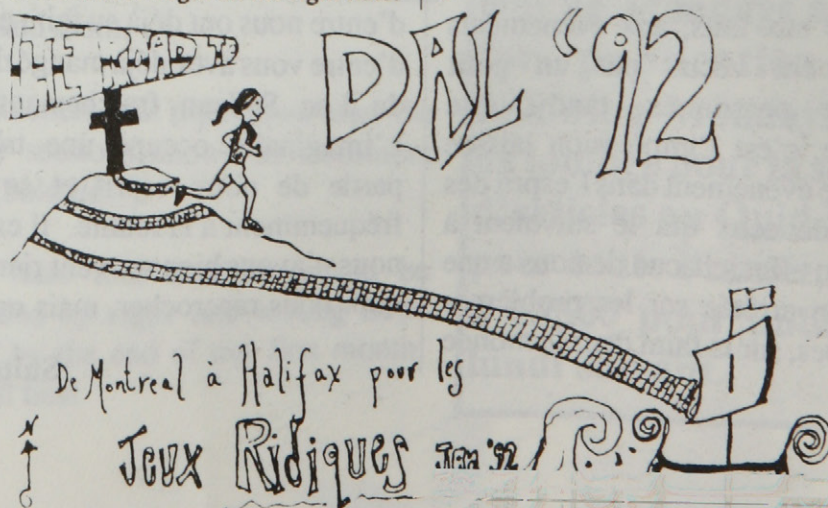
The men's football team, the Dregs won their opener on Sun. Sept. 22 by a score of 7-6. The win was salvaged by the last-minute heroics of Bob V. who blocked a convert on the last play of the game. Last year's finalists are anchored on offence by veterans Alain S., Nick K., Dave M. and Dave P. Defensive standouts included Dave M. and Brian S. This year's edition of the Dregs is stronger than ever. Their eyes are set on winning the championship. In their foray into the world of flag football, the Moot Loops, a composite of women from law and from other faculties, played on Mon. Sept. 16 a largely defensive game to a 0-0 tie. After a promising practise under the guidance of Alain S., things are looking up.

Men's Hockey «AA»

Out to avenge a 1-0 overtime loss in last year's playoffs and an early ouster at the Law Games, the 1991 version of the team took to the ice Monday night. Buoyed by the unexpected return of Darren M. («I'll never leave until I get a mug or Rob lets me be captain») and journeyman defenceman S. Blue, the boys looked spirited in their first workout. Big things are expected from sophomore defenceman Pierre C., who spent the off-season trying to get a try-out with the San Jose Sharks and junior Warren C., who spent the whole summer angry because his girlfriend was in Vancouver, and is looking for somebody to punish.

Men's Ball Hockey

The appellation of one of last year's teams proved prescient as the coffee house was banned from the Common Room. The Morisatans feel that despite this blow to the team and their fans, the presence of a lot of big dopey-looking guys in first year should enable them to replace a squad decimated by graduation.



Still in the Forest

By Jay Sinha, LLB I

Once upon a time two idealistic men spent 20 years in jail because they stood up for rights that we, as privileged Canadians, take for granted and sometimes even complain about. Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu, President and Deputy President of the African National Congress (ANC) respectively, are no longer in jail, but continue to stand up for basic rights which are yet to be tasted by South African Blacks. Albertina Sisulu, President of the ANC Women's League (formerly the Federation of South African Women) has opened the eyes of many to the oppressive plight of South African women - their emancipation staggered and stifled by apartheid. Walter and Albertina Sisulu opened many more eyes at a public meeting on September 22, 1991 at Concordia University as they explained the current South African situation.

According to Mr. Sisulu, the most important negotiations for freeing South African Blacks have not yet begun. Yes, there have been many significant advances in the recent past: the release of political prisoners, the return of exiled persons, the lifting of the state emergency, the lifting of the ban on the ANC and, most recently, the repeal of basic apartheid laws by the South African government. While this all sounds just dandy on paper, the day-to-day reality of life in a Johannesburg black township has yet to improve. Violence is the problem and over 10,000 deaths in the last year and a half are the result. Mr. Sisulu explained that the violence is aimed at preventing freedom negotiations by weakening the ANC and other liberation movements. Though the government denies any involvement in the «black on black violence», the recent «Inkatha-Gate» scandal has revealed that they have been secretly financing the Inkatha Freedom Party to

incite violence. In Mrs. Sisulu's words the government is «afraid of the unknown», an unknown which they fear could be a massive revolt by the masses. Yet the intentions and actions of the ANC and other liberation groups do not point towards a bloody revolution. Several weeks ago a peace accord was signed by the groups to ensure a non-violent atmosphere during negotiations on a post-apartheid constitution. On the night of the signing 60 people were killed. The actual negotiations will take place next month when an all-party congress will work towards a new constitution and an interim government based on fair, unbiased leadership.

Mrs. Sisulu's words were reserved primarily for the black children and women of South Africa. Children orphaned and made homeless by the violence now live in the streets. The Inkatha attacks, not always aimed directly at the ANC but also sometimes at the community in general, include random bombings and shootings and setting strings of homes on fire in the townships. In the case of such violence, it is the children who suffer the most and who understand the least.

Many black South African women and more and more children are illiterate through no fault of their own. Education is a grave problem as adequate facilities are not available for blacks. A number of black schools were vandalized in 1976 and have not been repaired since. Mrs. Sisulu appealed to Canadian students to «make noise», to take note of what South African students face and to speak out against it.

A strong current which ran throughout the meeting was for the maintenance of economic sanctions against South Africa by the International Community. Following Pretoria's repeal of apartheid legislation in the past year, several major

industrialized nations lifted anti-apartheid sanctions last month. About two years ago I went to a lecture by Helen Suzman, an outspoken anti-apartheid activist and the first woman to hold a seat in the South African legislature. She maintained that sanctions should be lifted as it is only the blacks who suffer from them. This may be true to some extent, but at the September 22nd 1991 meeting, Victor Moche, the Canadian representative of the ANC, proposed a different interpretation of the sanctions: «They say it is the blacks who are suffering?! The blacks have been oppressed, exploited and killed for fifty years - they are not hurting, apartheid is hurting!» It took 20 years to convince the world that sanctions were, and are, a necessary measure. Now, six years after their imposition, the world sees a change on paper and countries begin to lift the sanctions. Can't these countries see that the inside picture, a picture displayed almost daily in the media, has not changed? The reality is that political violence and outright racial discrimination have not yet disappeared from South Africa. In the words of Albertina Sisulu «We are still in the forest we are not yet out of the forest.»

WANTED!!!

The Quid is looking for someone interested in doing the layout. The work is done on a MacIntosh computer, but absolutely no previous experience is required. The work takes between 3-5 hours and anyone interested should be available on either Tuesday evening after 6h00 pm or during the day on Wednesday, but only on every second week (there are 2 production managers). First-year students looking to get involved in the Quid are welcome to apply. The first seriously interested person will get the position.

Traité imaginaire Suite de p. la p.1

prudent. Le danger de l'imaginaire est que la réalité inoffensive ou meurtrière ne ressemble aucunement à sa configuration imaginaire qui est réconfortante puisqu'elle répond exactement à nos attentes.

John Le Carré, dans son roman intitulé *Russia House*, décrit une telle situation. Les services secrets occidentaux sont mis au courant d'informations qui révèlent que le complexe militaro-industriel de l'URSS est miné par la corruption et que des résultats scientifiques sont falsifiés aux plus hauts niveaux. Le portrait dressé montre l'inefficacité du système de défense nucléaire soviétique. Cette information qui peut nous sembler heureuse ne réjouit pourtant aucunement l'appareil militaire et politique américain qui y voit la disparition de sa raison d'être. De plus, les responsables américains craignent que cette information n'affecte la confiance de la population envers leurs dirigeants, qui depuis des générations proclament la méfiance et la crainte de l'ennemi. La vérité, si elle devait éclater, exposerait sous un jour trop différent cet ennemi fait sur mesure.

Le façonnement de l'ennemi en fonction de nos attentes s'applique non seulement

aux individus, mais également aux groupes politiques ou sociaux désireux de s'attirer les sympathies publiques. L'ennemi est inventé, la réalité déformée, afin de créer un ennemi dont tous veulent se méfier et auquel tous veulent s'opposer.

La caricature qui accompagne cet article a été publiée dans le journal mexicain *Le Diario de Yucatán*, le 28 juillet de cette année. Cette caricature est surprenante du point de vue canadien. Elle donnait le ton à quelques articles publiés la même journée au sujet du projet de traité de libre-échange entre les États-Unis, le Mexique et le Canada. On y voit le premier ministre canadien, habillé en moine faussement compatissant, et le président du Mexique, qui monte sur un échafaud où le bourreau américain manipulé par le président des États-Unis s'apprête à actionner la guillotine. Le message est clair: la signature de ce traité est considérée comme une menace pour la survie économique du Mexique. L'on aurait plutôt tendance à penser, ici au Canada, que les travailleurs mexicains salivent déjà à la pensée du nombre d'emplois que générera cet accord, que les hommes d'affaires mexicains font la fiesta plusieurs fois par semaine pour fêter l'événement et que les politiciens se joignent à eux en voyant leurs postes protégés à vie par ce coup brillant.

L'«association des voleurs de jobs» que représente pour beaucoup de Canadiens le Mexique «libre-échangiste» n'est donc pas aussi pressée qu'on le croit à se lancer dans cette aventure.

Le Mexique a en effet de sérieux problèmes qui incitent à la prudence. L'infrastructure du pays est à plusieurs égards déficiente, et combinée à une politique monétaire instable, des réserves pétrolières mal exploitées par un monopole étatique, un taux de chômage énorme, de larges segments de la population sans le sou, cela donne un résultat effectivement plutôt inquiétant. Ce ne sont pourtant là que quelques-uns des problèmes auxquels doit faire face le Mexique moderne. Cet article ne se veut pas une diatribe sur les avantages ou les inconvénients de la signature d'un traité de libre-échange nord-américain, ni une dissertation sur les bienfaits respectifs du protectionnisme ou de la libre circulation des biens, mais simplement une prise de conscience de nos idées et de la façon dont nous les formulons. Il est trop facile de confondre la réalité avec l'imaginaire lorsque ce dernier correspond davantage à notre conception préexistante de la situation. Il est plus exigeant de remettre en question les idées reçues, car cela équivaut à se remettre en question soi-même, mais c'est la meilleure façon d'éviter les dangers de l'unanimité.



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A Summer Recollection

by D.J.M.

No matter what your age, it can never be so advanced as to wipe clean those «rosy» memories of marching, as if part of a funeral procession, into the sweltering heat of an elementary school classroom on the first day of September. Without fail, we were greeted by a painfully cheerful teacher whose capacity to repel sweat was only outweighed by an equally superhuman ability to speak without covering those sparkling pearly whites.

Fresh from wherever these fonts of knowledge spend their incomparably long holidays, the teacher would be without lesson plans - primarily because he or she had stepped off the plane twenty minutes before class. Thus, we, with our near infinite capacity to be distracted, were sentenced to 30 minutes of solitude in recounting the summer's adventures.

Personally, I was quite jealous of my classmates. They had always tottered off to the far reaches of the continent and had seen first-hand the wonders of a newly sculpted Disneyworld. Brimming with stories of America's modern «wonders», I was acutely aware of my somewhat less exotic vacation. Our family was the proud possessor of a cottage on the tip of a relatively large body of water which shall remain nameless for the simple fact that it adds a touch of universality to all those with memories of their own little Arcadia and secondly, it spares the author of this tale the scathing attacks from his infinitely more cosmopolitan classmates of Eastern abstraction.

Needless to say, the cottage was nice... quite nice... too nice in fact. Everyone was nice to each other, we played nice games, had a nice time on our beach, and

the days flowed, to be redundant, nicely... one into the next. Business, work, the news, the world were all light years away. Little of importance happened. Save for the family gatherings or adult «get-togethers» - read mass pickling of the elders' livers on gin and sodas - nothing punctuated our idyllic existence. Needless to say, by the time I was back in the shadow of Mrs. FitzPatrick, it took me a good three days before I could with confidence write the month as definitively September or June.

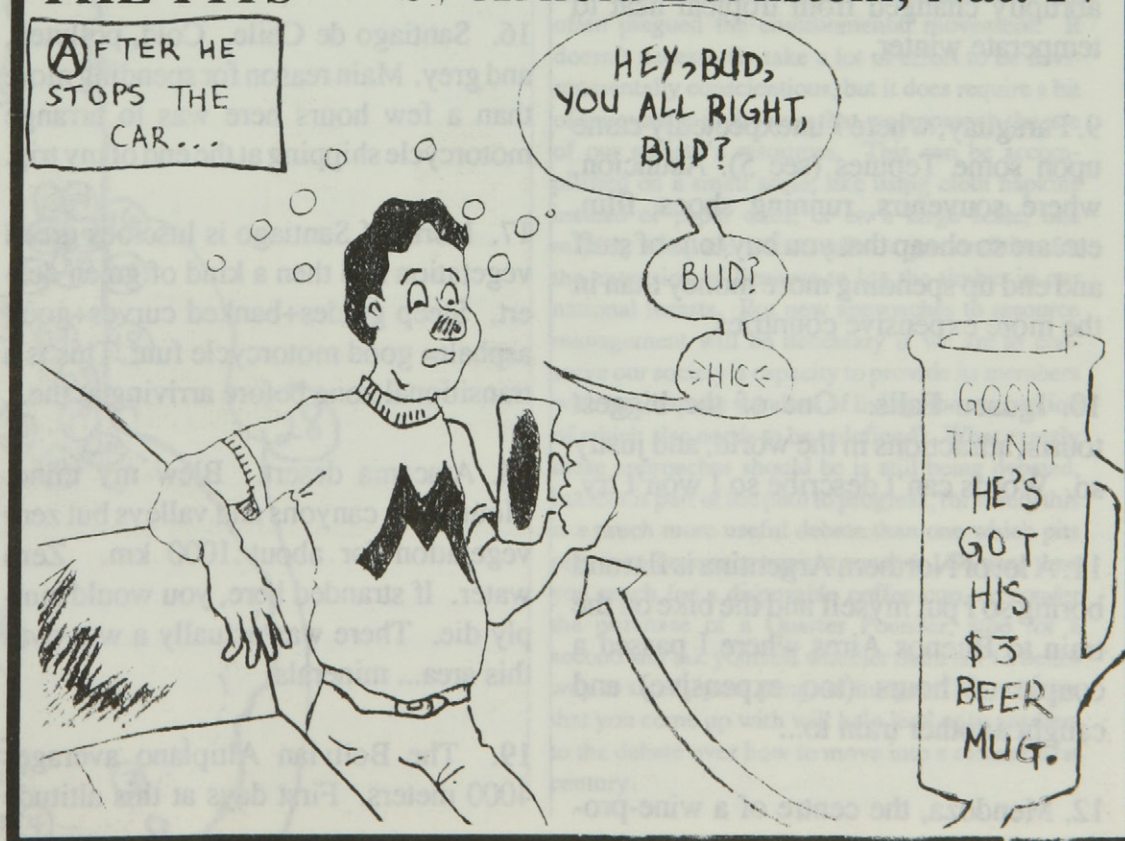
Well, the shadows upon me now or more correctly looming closely, are those of yet unknown Professors of Contracts, Evidence, and horrors, NCP. To be quite frank, I wouldn't mind being in the rather robust shadow of Mrs. FitzPatrick at this moment. No more legal posits and a gentle escape from the complications of an adult life heaved all too expediently on these unwilling shoulders. Over this summer, I came to realize that the jeal-

ousy of my Disney-bound comrades was ill placed. They were the unlucky ones to be deprived of a summertime of pure ease and peace. These recollections come to mind as our family is no longer the proud owner of a summer home on the Southern tip of that unnamed lake in Western Canada. It would seem that despite Mr. Portalis' assertions, relationships with property as with people are only temporary and at best tenuous. All things eventually come to an end.

So, as I sit trying to recount the details of my summer for a long forgotten Mrs. FitzPatrick and you my friends and classmates, I am overcome with a nostalgia that pains. Such sweet sublimation were we blessed with: no worries, no deadlines, not much of anything save for relaxation. It was painful relaxation at the time for I longed for action and the sights and sounds of different landscapes. In a sense, we got to Disneyworld, but now there is no home to retreat to.

THE PITS

by Arnold Bornstein, Nat. IV



South America

Cont'd from p.1

nately, being rainy season, clouds shrouded them from view and my only knowledge of them is what I've seen in National Geographic.

6. Amazonia

a) by land: not recommended in rainy season. The red earth (typical of most of South America) turns into a mud that is not only slippery but also can build up and pack solid enough under your fender to seriously damage your tire. The impossible-to-avoid-them-all water puddles are muddied so that you can't know if they're 1 cm or 1 mtr deep. Adventure? You bet.

b) by water: recommended for the faint-of-heart (me). Slow but easy ride on river barges, the main means of getting trucks and their cargo in and out of the amazon jungle. Free bonus with each trip: learn truck-driver style Portuguese (no choice, there's nowhere to go and no-one else to talk to).

7. Matto Grosso. Big, flat, and red. Bigger than Texas, flatter than Saskatchewan, and redder than PEI. And more boring than all of them put together.

8. Somewhere around here the weather abruptly changed from tropical heat to temperate winter.

9. Paraguay, where I unexpectedly came upon some Tepuies (see 5). Asuncion, where souvenirs, running shoes, film, etc. are so cheap that you buy tons of stuff and end up spending more money than in the more expensive countries.

10. Iguacu Falls. One of the biggest tourist attractions in the world, and justly so. Words can't describe so I won't try.

11. A lot of Northern Argentina is flat and boring so I put myself and the bike on the train to Buenos Aires where I passed a couple of hours (too expensive) and caught another train to...

12. Mendoza, the centre of a wine-pro-

ducing region in the shadow of the Andes. Spent about 5 days with a family of Italian descent, owners of a vineyard. Went on a exclusive tour of the production centre, tasted, and was given a bottle of the best champagne (cork later worked itself out in knapsack). Drank wine with every meal.

13. The pass to Chile over which Bolivar, the liberator, (if I saw one monument to him, I saw 100) led his troops, was still being cleared of the last snowfall when I made my run to the border. It was -10 degrees, ice and snow were everywhere, and cars were required to mount chains. When they saw me coming, they just waved me on through. The authorities don't over-protect you in South America; you can kill yourself if you want.

14. By now it was too dark to try to descend the Chilean side. There was a refuge just outside Immigration & Customs. It was three degrees in my room.

15. Went down some very tight switchbacks. This section of the Pan-American Highway is also a ski area and conditions were particularly good on this day. Skiers were looking down at me from their chairlift jumping over the road, all going much faster than I.

16. Santiago de Chile. Cold, polluted, and grey. Main reason for spending more than a few hours here was to arrange motorcycle shipping at the end of my trip.

17. North of Santiago is luscious green vegetation and then a kind of green desert. Steep grades+banked curves+good asphalt= good motorcycle fun. This is a transitional zone before arriving at the...

18. Atacama desert. Blew my mind. Mountains, canyons and valleys but zero vegetation for about 1000 km. Zero water. If stranded here, you would simply die. There was actually a war over this area... minerals.

19. The Bolivian Altiplano averages 4000 meters. First days at this altitude

feature headaches, shortness of breath and your drinking water freezing in the -10 degree nights. Coca leaves are prescribed for all of the conditions, and many more, so I hear.

20. The road to Bolivia is paved with good intentions but the roads in Bolivia are rarely paved at all. What are called roads are in pretty bad shape. Once I rode all day to do 125 km. My bike and I were being shook to pieces, the shock absorber wore out, the tires were balding and the carburetor cables were fraying. All in all, the bike was getting tired but not nearly as much as I. The question that I asked myself (but was too vain to answer) was «Am I getting too old for this kind of stuff?» But sometimes I would round a corner and see some scenery that would be hard to imagine and it would all be worth it, or almost.

21. La Paz. Impressive location. Built on the steep hillside of canyons dropping down from the Altiplano. An outdoor market covered half the city. A few hours from Lago Titicaca, tourist and spiritual centre.

22. Potosi was one of the richest silver mines in the world. About 8 million slaves died extracting «plata» for the Spaniards. UNESCO has classified it a site of humanity's cultural etc. patrimony. It doesn't look that special to me. You're welcome to tour the mines. Just buy some coca leaves, dynamite and fuses (on the street) to leave as presents with the miners who all contract silicosis. Inside it's dark, stuffy and very hot. I felt like leaving after only 5 minutes. After only an hour inside I had to shield my eyes for about 10 minutes after returning to the surface. The slaves were kept under for 4 months at a time. Their eyes had to be bandaged before going out for their days off.

23. The Salar de Uyuni, a salt flat 100 km across. Usually very white but with a slight brown tingle while I was there due to recent volcanic activity. You

Cont'd on p.7

Cont'd from p.6

shouldn't get lost if you stick to the main tracks but take a compass just in case. Also in this area is Laguna Colorada, which I had planned to visit ever since paragraph 2. Project abandoned due to time considerations, steadily deteriorating conditions of roads and uncertainty over integrity of bike.

24. The road south from Uyuni to Argentina holds the record for worst condition experienced. Fell down about 8 times as the sand got deeper and deeper. Tried riding on railroad tracks for awhile but conditions were unpredictable and train schedule unknown. Learned the secret to sand riding: let lots of air out of the tires. I suppose there's a limit as to how much sand you can compensate for with this method. I'm lucky the road didn't pass this point. It's funny, though, when conditions get bad you curse but when they get really bad you stop cursing and start praying that they just don't get impossible.

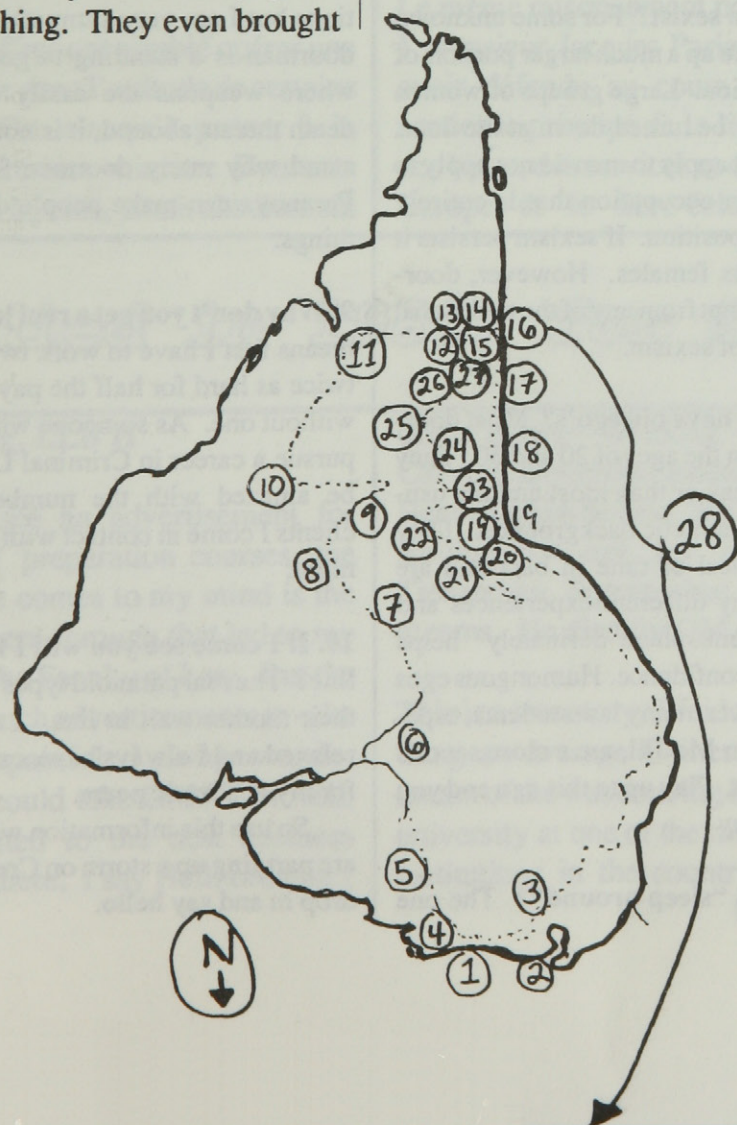
25. Crossed into northern Argentina. Because of the drugs flowing out of Bolivia, this was the only place on the whole trip where my stuff really got a thorough searching. They even brought

out a dog to sniff around my bike (although we all had to wait a bit for him/her to urinate before beginning work).

26. South again to Mendoza. Only one bit of spectacular scenery on this bit. But it's almost impossible to describe and the lighting conditions weren't right to capture it on film so I guess I'll just keep it to myself.

27. Back over the pass. Much less cold and snow this time. Poor skiing conditions.. Santiago was still grey and polluted, although less cold. Put the bike in a box and shipped it off to Australia (site of next trip, if I manage to scrape the cash together).

28. Five days of non-stop taxis, buses, propeller-driven planes and jets. Slept little and ate even less. Passed through Chile, Peru, Ecuador, Columbia and Venezuela to catch a flight from Caracas back to New York and another up to Montreal. Passing Shea Stadium, taxi driver said «Yeah, something's wrong with Montreal's stadium. They have to play all their games away.» I said «It's nice to know things never change.» I knew I was home.



Green Space:

Paper or Styrofoam? Who cares?

By Christopher Sherrin, LLB III

A rather curious debate has occurred recently over which is more environmentally friendly: paper or styrofoam cups? The general public perception seems to be that it is styrofoam that is the terrible evil, and that we must do all we can in order to switch over to the use of paper cups. Witness the public pressure exerted on the McDonald's food chain that successfully lobbied it to serve us our Big Mac in cardboard containers. But then along came University of Victoria professor Martin Hocking last February with a study indicating that, all things considered, that dreaded styrofoam is actually environmentally friendlier than paper. Of course, his conclusions have since been attacked by everyone and his poodle, and it doesn't appear that he has done much to sway public opinion. But one must ask whether this debate isn't missing the point. It is a very laudable and useful thing to know which of two choices damages the environment less; but surely it is much more useful to know how we can act in ways that don't produce any significant waste at all! Why are we limiting ourselves to a choice between two evils, when there exists a more benign third possibility? In other words, use a glass.

The debate over paper vs. styrofoam exemplifies the rather limited scope of imagination that has often plagued the environmental movement. It doesn't necessarily take a lot of effort to be environmentally conscientious, but it does require a bit of innovation in the way that we approach the use of our society's resources. This can be accomplished on a small scale, like using cloth napkins instead of paper ones, or on a large scale, like making adequate reforestation a precondition for the extension of licences to log the timber in our national forests. But new approaches to resource management will be necessary if we are to conserve our society's capacity to provide its members with an adequate standard of living (the conception of which also needs to be redefined). What exactly these approaches should be is still being debated, but this is part of the path to progress, for surely this is a much more useful debate than one which pits one waste-generator against another. So next time you reach for a disposable coffee-cup, or ponder the purchase of a Quarter Pounder, stop for a second and ask yourself whether there isn't a better way to satisfy your pangs of hunger. The solution that you come up with will help lead us to answers to the debate over how to move into a cleaner 21st century.

Dispelling the Myths: The Insights of a Crescent Street Doorman

by Nick Katerinakis, BCL II

Let's face it. Whether you love them, or hate them, every one has sucked up to a doorman at least once in their life. For the past five years I have subsidised my income by working as a doorman in over a dozen bars in two provinces. In that time I have seen thousands of men and women make absolute fools of themselves. For the benefit of my beloved faculty members I have decided to tell all and spare many of you from this humiliation. I have tempered my ego and risked alienating many of my co-workers in attempting to bring you the truth. The following are just some of the questions I am most often asked.

1. Are all doormen stupid? This is an absolute falsehood! There are many stupid doormen but they are often relegated to patrolling the dark recesses of the bar or the bathrooms. The doorman you will have to deal with at the front door will most likely be smart, cool and quite reserved. More often than not they will be selectively bilingual (or even trilingual), using the language that best suits any given situation.

2. Are you looking for a certain type of crowd (or look)? A doorman has very little say on a bar's clientele. He is at the mercy of management. Yelling and screaming at the fact that your torn jeans cost over a hundred dollars will not help change old archaic rules. However, a five dollar bill might help the doorman look the other way for a few minutes. Which brings us to the next question.

3. Do doormen accept bribes? Working in bars can be quite lucrative. Doormen accept "tips" if they are offered discreetly. (i.e. a five dollar bill handshake). However all the money in the world will not get you in a bar if you have raised your voice or made a scene at the front door. Nor will it excuse idiotic behaviour once inside the bar. In fact, even courtesy cards obtained by the manager or

bartender can be scoffed at by a doorman who has been "rubbed" the wrong way. Time is money: people who spend hours waiting in line-ups are losers and should consider a permanent move to the Soviet Union.

4. How do I become a regular? doormen see thousands of faces every week. In order to make an impact he has to see you at the bar quite often. You can create this illusion by coming into the bar on off nights or by walking into the bar many times in one night. Both methods really don't require much money. Remember spending a lot of money in the bar offers no guarantees; the bartender and managers are hardly ever going to help you get past that doorman. While being friendly never hurts, never be overzealous. I have seen it backfire on people. If you see a doorman at another bar on his off night, buy him a drink, it will go a long way.

5. Are doormen sexist? For some unknown reason men make up a much larger portion of any bar population. Large groups of women will hardly ever be turned down at the door. Dress codes that apply to men do not apply to women. It is an occupation that is entirely male in its composition. If sexism persists it definitely favors females. However, doormen are not exempt from any of the traditional manifestations of sexism.

6. Do doormen have big ego's? Most doormen are between the ages of 20 and 30. They are taller and heavier than most and are usually drawn from athletic backgrounds. They spend a great deal of time in bars and are exposed to many different experiences and people. This atmosphere definitely helps build their self-confidence. Humongous egos do exist. However, many law students, especially those from McGill, are a close second on that ego chart. Play up to this ego and you will get your way

7. Do doormen "sleep around"? The one

night stand is a thing of the past. Contrary to popular belief, most doormen are quite fickle about their relationships, sexual in nature or not. Good boyfriends they do not make. The late hours and the persistence of some women will undoubtedly strain any relationship.

8. Do doormen get into a lot of fights? In my experience 90% of all bar fights involve doormen only to the extent that they must separate the combatants and escort them outside the bar. Fighting a doorman is a no win proposition. They usually have the backing of the bar, the police and the patrons who are often prepared to perjure themselves for the good favour of their beloved doorman. As such, the few cases that do go to trial usually favor the doorman. He is there to do a job while the majority of patrons are innibriated. Some take advantage of this and I have seen a great deal of unnecessary violence in many of my workplaces. I cannot condone these actions but I am very sympathetic to them. A doorman is a standing target. In a society where weapons are easily accessible and death threats abound, it is not hard to understand why many doormen feel vulnerable. Paranoia can make people do very strange things.

9. Why don't you get a real job? If a real job means that I have to work twice as long and twice as hard for half the pay then I can live without one. As someone who is aspiring to pursue a career in Criminal Law, one would be amazed with the number of potential clients I come in contact with each and every night.

10. If I come see you will I have to wait in line? The real paranoid types will even make their mother wait in line. I am much more relaxed and I always have a sympathetic ear for my academic peers.

So use this information wisely and if you are partying up a storm on Crescent street, do drop in and say hello.